[English]

Projected Growth of Tourism

2171. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the projected growth of tourism in the country during 1996 has failed to materialise;

(b) if so, the estimated arrival of international tourists in the country during 1996 as against the projection;

(c) the estimated loss of foreign exchange suffered as a result thereof;

(d) the cause identified for the setback in tourist sector in the country; and

(e) the strategy formulated for the promotion of tourism?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) to (d) The international tourist arrivals in the country during 1996 were 2287860 registering a positive growth of 7.7% against the projected growth of about 8% during the year. The marginal difference is primarily due to decline in traffic from Pakistan. There is no significant loss of foreign exchange earnings from tourists during this year.

(e) The strategy for the promotion of tourism include improvement of infrastructural facilities, strengthening of promotional efforts and human resource development.

[Translation]

Ratlam-Banswara-Dungarpur-Himmatnagar Railway Line

2172. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA:

SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey is being conducted to link Ratlam-Banswara-Dungarpur-Himmatnagar with rail;

(b) if so, the time by which the above survey work is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not starting the above survey work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The survey is likely to be completed by 31.12.97.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Export of Steel

2173. SHRI RAMASHRAYA PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an increase in the export of indigenous steel during the first nine months (April-December) of the current financial year by 31.6 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to fix target to further increase the export up to 50% during the next financial year;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) The estimated exports of finished steel by Main producers viz. Steel Authority of India Limited, Tata Iron & Steel Company Ltd. and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. during the first nine months (April-December) of 1996-97 were 7.47 lakh tonnes, showing an increase of about 36.6% as compared to the corresponding period last year.

(c) to (e) As per the existing policy, export of iron and steel is freely allowed. Export of iron and steel and its destination depend on several factors such as domestic and international demand, domestic prices, steel prices in importing countries, etc. These factors are usually dynamic and change frequently. Based on prevailing market conditions, enterprises themselves explore and tap the export market. As such the Government does not fix targets for exports. However, the measures taken by the Government to facilitate exports include:

(i) Full convertibility of export earnings at market rate of exchange;

(ii) Facility available to Exporters to import their requirement of raw materials duty free under the Advance Licensing Scheme;

(iii) Refund of the duty paid on any imported or excisable material used in the manufacture of export goods; and

(iv) Exemption of export earnings from income-tax under Section 80 HHC.

[Translation]

Welfare of Labourers

2174. SHRI PAWAN DIWAN:
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA:
SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made any efforts for the welfare and development of unorganised labour;

(b) if so, the details thereof during each of the last three years; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?